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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CALLS ON VICE PRESIDENT MAHAMA

11. (SBU) Ambassador called on newly elected Vice President John Mahama at Osu Castle on January 23. He congratulated Mahama on his election and pledged the goodwill of the US government and the continuation of bilateral programs. Mahama spoke primarily about economic programs that his new government hoped to implement to help stimulate the Ghanaian economy and create more jobs. He mentioned a letter the new government had received from the country director of the World Bank, and lamented that the Kufuor government had left the economy in a bad state. (NOTE: The letter from the World Bank director was leaked to the press and has been in wide circulation. It decries the perilous state of the economy, a position the previous government claims has been overstated. END NOTE)

12. (SBU) Mahama's strongest interest was in the agricultural sector, where he thought Ghana's economy could make the most rapid gains. When he requested US assistance, Ambassador pointed out the strong agricultural component of the \$547-million Millenium Challenge Compact, and the effect some of the programs it had already put into place was already having on Ghana's agricultural exports. Mahama was pleased with the progress, and urged more cooperative programs.

13. (SBU) Ambassador told Mahama that he had encouraged Kosmos Oil to meet early with the new government to win approval of their contract for drilling and production in the Gulf of Guinea, and said that he hoped the Vice President had found that meeting useful. Mahama responded that the government had been favorably impressed with the Kosmos presentation, and he asked the Ambassador to encourage the company to put its plans on "a fast track."

14. (SBU) Ambassador asked Mahama about his upcoming trip to represent President Mills at the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa. Mahama said that he would be leaving January 30, and would welcome a meeting with Acting A/S Phillip Carter. His advance team, he said, would be led by the MFA's chief director, Ambassador J.E. Aggrey. Embassy will contact Aggrey to work out arrangements for the Carter meeting.  
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